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SUBJECT: HUNGARIAN COMMENTS ON EU'S MARCH 10-11 FOREIGN
MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC)

REF: SECSTATE 22352

¶1. MFA EU External Relations and Crisis Situations Section
Chief Andras Dekany discussed reftel agenda items with PolOff
on March 7. Dekany provided the following comments by agenda
item:

Western Balkans:

- Kosovo: Good news that the government in Pristina has shown "sufficient maturity" in dealing with Serbia and potential Serbian reactions to the declaration of independence. That said, the Kosovar Government needs to reach out to the Serb and other minorities. We must carefully, but deliberately, proceed in northern Kosovo, calming down the situation to prevent further escalation. While Hungary does not support preserving UNMIK's full powers in northern Kosovo, the EULEX mission is very important. EULEX should "not say no" to one of its most important purposes - the protection of the Serb minority. The EULEX mission should be particularly active in Serbian enclaves while, at the same time, paying careful attention to preserve the patience of Pristina. The NATO/EU relationship in Kosovo is crucial in addressing the issues in Kosovo.

- Serbia: They are in an internal political crisis. The situation is very fluid, and we should not take actions that could do harm to those who support EU integration. Early elections would lead to a less favorable situation, and the EU should continue the Interim EU agreement regardless of the rhetoric. The visa liberalization roadmap should be implemented - it would be difficult even for the hard-liners to refuse. We are open and ready to handle the Stability and Association Agreements (SAA) in a flexible fashion.

- Bosnia: Favorable and unfavorable news. We believe it would be a turning point if we could bring the SAA closer to implementation to support police reform. The EU should make it clear to the politicians, especially those in Republika Srpska, that the EU will refuse to recognize the results of any referendum on independence.

- Israeli-Palestinian peace process: This will be an item for the EU Council rather than the GAERC.

- Pakistan: We welcome the basically free election results, agreeing with the preliminary report of the EU - the elections are an important benchmark in the democratization process in Pakistan. We encourage all factions to work together to face the threat of terrorism. Additionally, as a nuclear weapons nation, instability has broader EU context. Closer to home, the Hungarian energy company, MOL, has assets in Pakistan, thus there are economic implications as well for Hungary associated with instability.

Zimbabwe: We are concerned that the Mugabe government has not called for UN or EU observers for the upcoming March 29 elections. We support EU efforts related to the SADC

initiatives to mediate between the Government and the opposition.

- Georgia: We support an EU negotiating mandate for a free trade agreement between the EU and Georgia based on a feasibility study as well as launching an examination of the current visa process. As many Georgian citizens also hold Russian citizenship, we support strengthening confidence building measures between Georgia and their disputed regions.

- Iran: The U.S. has an important role to play in "selling" the sanctions - to promote the necessity of implementation to other countries. Some European countries are reluctant, viewing the UNSC resolution as providing some flexibility to fully implement all sanctions, thus putting EU member states at an economic disadvantage.

¶2. In closing, Dekany noted that discussions of Afghanistan will most likely take place at the Ministerial dinner, while the Western Balkans and Iran items will be discussed during the formal lunch, rather than during the meeting sessions.

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